Advanced Mute Function

Abstract:

Whereas existing types of electronic equipment (television, radio, etc.) have a mute function that turns the sound either on or off, this has a very limited functionality.

I claim:

1) A method by which pushing down on a mute button for a device results in the mute function of the device staying mute for a period of time.

2) A method for the user to push on the mute button within a "short period of time" to cause the mute function on a device to stay mute for that multiple of times by which the mute button is pushed. If the mute button is pushed down but not within the shorter period of time and the device is in mute mode the system will override and turn the sound back on.

3) A method and interface to control set and or change both above functions. The first being the period of time for which the mute bottom is to stay in mute mode for each time the mute button is pushed in the shorter period of time. The second being the period of time for which the system differentiates the mute function when the mute button is pushed in the shorter period of time or pushed within a longer period of time.

Description:

This invention relates to improving the functionality of the mute button used with electronic equipment such as radios, television sets etc. Presently the user wants to turn the sound off for a variety of reason but can only turn the sound on or off. If the person wishes to have a device in mute mode for a set period of time, such as when commercials are on and thus wishes to mute the device to avoid listening to the commercials, the user must maintain a vigilance to wait for the period of time to end. This would enable to user to put the system into mute mode for a period of time and thus avoid further observance. If the user estimates or knows that the commercials will be on for the next three minutes and the system is set to mute in 30 second increments then the user can push on the mute button six times, within the shorter period (let say this is set to 5 seconds) of time. This will cause the mute function on the device to be in mute mode for three minutes of time and then turn back on the sound at the end of the three minutes. If during the period of time when the mute has been push on and after when the short period of time is up and the user wants to override and turn the sound back on, then pushing on the mute button once (after the five seconds are up) will turn the sound back on.